

We claim:

1. A method for engaging the peripheral attention of a person in the vicinity of a display device, comprising the steps of:

5 providing one or more sets of content data to a content display system associated with the display device and located entirely in the same physical location as the display device;

10 providing to the content display system a set of instructions for enabling the content display system to selectively display, in an unobtrusive manner that does not distract a user of the display device or an apparatus associated with the display device from a primary interaction with the display device or apparatus, an image
15 or images generated from a set of content data; and

 auditing the display of sets of content data by the content display system;

 wherein the one or more sets of content data are selected from a plurality of sets of content data, each set
20 being provided by an associated content provider, wherein each associated content provider is located in a different physical location than at least one other content provider and each content provider provides its content data to the content display system independently of each other content
25 provider and without the content data being aggregated at a common physical location remote from the content display system prior to being provided to the content display system, and wherein for each set the respective content provider may provide scheduling instructions tailored to
30 the set of content data to control at least one of the

duration, sequencing, and timing of the display of said image or images generated from the set of content data.

2. A method as in Claim 68, wherein the display device comprises a television.

5 3. A computer readable medium encoded with one or more computer programs for enabling engagement of the peripheral attention of a person in the vicinity of a display device, comprising:

10 instructions for providing one or more sets of content data to a content display system associated with the display device and located entirely in the same physical location as the display device;

15 instructions for providing to the content display system a set of instructions for enabling the content display system to selectively display, in an unobtrusive manner that does not distract a user of the display device or an apparatus associated with the display device from a primary interaction with the display device or apparatus, an image or images generated from a set of content data; and

20 instructions for auditing the display of sets of content data by the content display system;

25 wherein the one or more sets of content data are selected from a plurality of sets of content data, each set being provided by an associated content provider, wherein each associated content provider is located in a different physical location than at least one other content provider and each content provider provides its content data to the content display system independently of each other content

provider and without the content data being aggregated at a common physical location remote from the content display system prior to being provided to the content display system, and wherein for each set the respective content provider may provide scheduling instructions tailored to the set of content data to control at least one of the duration, sequencing, and timing of the display of said image or images generated from the set of content data.

4. A computer readable medium as in Claim 70, wherein the one or more computer programs enable display of an image or images on a display device comprising a television.

5. A computer readable medium encoded with one or more computer programs for enabling engagement of the peripheral attention of a person in the vicinity of a display device, comprising:

instructions for acquiring a set of content data from a content providing system;

instructions for detecting an idle period of predetermined duration; and

instructions for selectively displaying on the display device, after detection of the idle period and in an unobtrusive manner that does not distract a user of the display device or an apparatus associated with the display device from a primary interaction with the display device or apparatus, an image or images generated from the set of content data;

wherein the set of content data is selected from a plurality of sets of content data, each set being provided by

an associated content provider, wherein each associated content provider is located in a different physical location than at least one other content provider and each content provider provides its content data to a content display system associated with the and located entirely in the same physical location as the display device independently of each other content provider and without the content data being aggregated at a common physical location remote from the content display system prior to being provided to the content display system, and wherein for each set the respective content provider may provide scheduling instructions tailored to the set of content data to control at least one of the duration, sequencing, and timing of the display of said image or images generated from the set of content data.

6. A computer readable medium as in Claim 72, wherein the one or more computer programs enable display of an image or images on a display device comprising a television

7. A content display system for engaging the peripheral attention of a person in the vicinity of a display device located in the same physical location as the content display system, comprising:

data acquisition apparatus that enables acquisition of a set of content data;

display apparatus that effects selective display on the display device, in an unobtrusive manner that does not distract a user of the display device or an apparatus associated with the display device from a primary interaction with the display device or apparatus, of an image or images generated from the set of content data;

user input apparatus that enables selection by a user of one or more control options during the selective display of the image or images generated from the set of content data; and

5 a system control device that controls aspects of the operation of the system in accordance with a selected control option;

10 wherein the set of content data is selected from a plurality of sets of content data, each set being provided by an associated content provider, wherein each associated content provider is located in a different physical location than at least one other content provider and each content provider provides its content data to the content display system independently of each other content provider and
15 without the content data being aggregated at a common physical location remote from the content display system prior to being provided to the content display system, and wherein for each set the respective content provider may provide scheduling instructions tailored to the set of
20 content data to control at least one of the duration, sequencing, and timing of the display of said image or images generated from the set of content data.

8. A system as in Claim 74, wherein the display device comprises a television.

25 9. A system as in Claim 74, wherein:

 a link control option enables the user to establish a link with an information location; and

the system control device establishes the link with the information location in response to selection of the link control option.

10. A method for engaging the peripheral attention of a person in the vicinity of a display device, comprising the steps of:

acquiring a set of content data from a content providing system;

selectively displaying on the display device, in an unobtrusive manner that does not distract a user of the display device or an apparatus associated with the display device from a primary interaction with the display device or apparatus, an image or images generated from the set of content data;

enabling selection by a user of one or more control options during the selective display of the image or images generated from the set of content data; and

controlling aspects of the operation of the system in accordance with a selected control option;

wherein the set of content data is selected from a plurality of sets of content data, each set being provided by an associated content provider, wherein each associated content provider is located in a different physical location than at least one other content provider and each content provider provides its content data to a content display system associated with the and located entirely in the same physical location as the display device independently of each other content provider and without the content data being

aggregated at a common physical location remote from the content display system prior to being provided to the content display system, and wherein for each set the respective content provider may provide scheduling instructions tailored to the set of content data to control at least one of the duration, sequencing, and timing of the display of said image or images generated from the set of content data.

11. A method as in Claim 77, wherein the display device comprises a television.

12. A method as in Claim 77, wherein a link control option enables the user to establish a link with a information location, the step of controlling aspects of the operation of the system further comprising the step of establishing the link with the information location in response to selection of the link control option.

13. A computer readable medium encoded with one or more computer programs for enabling engagement of the peripheral attention of a person in the vicinity of a display device, comprising:

instructions for acquiring a set of content data from a content providing system;

instructions for selectively displaying on the display device, in an unobtrusive manner that does not distract a user of the display device or an apparatus associated with the display device from a primary interaction with the display device or apparatus, an image or images generated from the set of content data;

instructions for enabling selection by a user of one or more control options during the selective display of the image or images generated from the set of content data; and

5 instructions for controlling aspects of the operation of the system in accordance with a selected control option;

10 wherein the set of content data is selected from a plurality of sets of content data, each set being provided by an associated content provider, wherein each associated content provider is located in a different physical location than at least one other content provider and each content provider provides its content data to a content display system associated with the and located entirely in the same physical location as the display device independently of each other content provider and without the content data being
15 aggregated at a common physical location remote from the content display system prior to being provided to the content display system, and wherein for each set the respective content provider may provide scheduling instructions tailored to the set of content data to control at least one of the
20 duration, sequencing, and timing of the display of said image or images generated from the set of content data.

14. A computer readable medium as in Claim 80, wherein the one or more computer programs enable display of an image or
25 images on a display device comprising a television.

15. A computer readable medium as in Claim 80, wherein a link control option enables the user to establish a link with an information location, the instructions for controlling aspects of the operation of the system further comprising instructions for establishing the link with the information location in response to selection of the link control.